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Open-ended Meeting of Governmental Experts on the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects
New York, 9-13 May 2011

Report of the Open-ended Meeting of Governmental Experts on the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 63/72, concerning the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the General Assembly decided to convene an open-ended meeting of governmental experts to address key implementation challenges and opportunities relating to particular issues and themes, including international cooperation and assistance, for a period of one week, no later than 2011.

2. In its resolution 64/50, the General Assembly recalled its decision to convene an open-ended meeting of governmental experts.

3. In its resolution 65/64, the General Assembly decided that, in conformity with resolution 64/50, the open-ended meeting of governmental experts to address key implementation challenges and opportunities relating to particular issues and themes, including international cooperation and assistance, would be held in New York from 9 to 13 May 2011.

II. Organizational matters

A. Opening and duration of the meeting

4. The Open-ended Meeting of Governmental Experts on the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects was held at United Nations

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Headquarters from 9 to 13 May 2011. Nine plenary meetings were held to consider the key implementation challenges and opportunities relating to particular issues and themes, including international cooperation and assistance.

5. Secretariat services were provided by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management. The Office for Disarmament Affairs provided support on substantive issues.

6. The Open-ended Meeting of Governmental Experts on the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects was opened by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Sergio Duarte, who made a statement. The High Representative also conducted the election of the Chair of the meeting.

B. Officers

7. At the 1st meeting, on 9 May, Mr. Jim McLay (New Zealand) was elected by acclamation to serve as the Chair.

8. At the 2nd meeting, also on 9 May, the following officers were elected by acclamation:

Vice-Chairs:
Philippines, Bulgaria and Saint Lucia.

9. At the 5th meeting, on 11 May, the following officer was elected by acclamation:

Vice-Chair:
Nigeria.

C. Adoption of the agenda

10. At the 1st meeting, the provisional agenda for the meeting (A/CONF.192/MGE/2011/L.1) was adopted, as orally revised. The revised agenda (A/CONF.192/MGE/2011/L.1/Rev.1) reads as follows:

1. Opening of the meeting by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.
2. Election of the Chair.
3. Statement of the Chair.
4. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
5. Introduction to the issue.
6. Consideration of key implementation challenges and opportunities relating to the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, including international cooperation and assistance:
   (a) Marking;
   (b) Record-keeping;

(c) Cooperation in tracing;

(d) National frameworks;

(e) Regional cooperation;

(f) International assistance and capacity-building.

7. Any other business and consideration and adoption of the report of the meeting:

(a) Any other business;

(b) Consideration and adoption of the report of the meeting.

11. At the same meeting, the programme of work (A/CONF.192/MGE/2011/L.2) was considered and adopted, as orally revised. The revised programme of work was subsequently circulated under the symbol A/CONF.192/MGE/2011/L.2/Rev.1.

D. Rules of procedure

12. The meeting was held under the rules of procedure of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects held in 2001 (A/CONF.192/L.1), which were applied mutatis mutandis.

13. At the 1st meeting, in accordance with rule 63, paragraphs (a) and (b), of the rules of procedure, a decision was taken on the participation of non-governmental organizations in the work of the meeting.

E. Documentation

14. The thematic discussion papers submitted by the Chair of the meeting are contained in document A/CONF.192/MGE/2011/CRP.1.

15. The list of participants in the meeting is contained in document A/CONF.192/MGE/2011/INF/1/Rev.1.

III. Proceedings

16. At the 1st meeting, the meeting discussed organization of work and introduction to the issue. The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs made a statement.

17. At the same meeting, the Chair of the meeting made an introductory statement. Statements were made by the representatives of Switzerland, in the capacity of Chair of the Open-ended Working Group to Negotiate an International Tracing Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, and of Egypt and the United States of America in their capacity as moderators of the International Tracing Instrument segments of the Third and Fourth Biennial Meetings of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, respectively. Statements were made by the representatives of Bolivia (Plurinational State of) (on

behalf of the Andean Community), the Sudan, Cuba and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. A statement was made by a representative of the Small Arms Survey. Statements and country presentations were made by various experts.

18. At its 2nd and 3rd meetings, held on 9 and 10 May, respectively, the meeting considered agenda item 6 (a).

19. At its 3rd and 4th meetings, held on 10 May, the meeting considered agenda item 6 (b) and began consideration of agenda item 6 (c).

20. At its 5th and 6th meetings, held on 11 May, the meeting considered agenda item 6 (c) and began consideration of agenda item 6 (d).

21. At its 7th meeting, held on 12 May, the meeting continued consideration of agenda item 6 (d).

22. At its 8th meeting, held on 12 May, the meeting considered agenda item 6 (e).

23. At its 9th meeting, held on 13 May, the meeting considered agenda items 6 (f) and 7 (a).

24. At its 10th meeting, held on 13 May, the meeting considered agenda item 7 (b).

Statements by non-governmental organizations

25. At the 9th meeting, statements were made by the representatives of non-governmental organizations.

IV. Consideration and adoption of the report

26. At the 10th meeting, on 13 May 2011, under agenda item 7 (b), the Chair presented to delegations a meeting summary prepared in thorough consultations with delegations, which is reproduced in paragraphs 27 to 37 below.

27. In the course of their discussions, participants emphasized the importance of the continued and full implementation of the Programme of Action as the main framework for measures within the activities of the international community to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, as well as the International Tracing Instrument.

28. Participants reaffirmed their respect for and commitment to international law and the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and recalled, inter alia, those purposes and principles referred to in the preamble to the Programme of Action.

29. Participants focused their discussions on the themes of marking, record-keeping and cooperation in tracing, national frameworks, regional cooperation and international assistance and capacity-building.

30. Participants recognized that weapons marking, record-keeping and tracing are mutually reinforcing activities that should be an integral part of national efforts to control small arms and light weapons. They also noted the enabling role that effective national frameworks, active regional and international cooperation, the provision of assistance upon request and national capacity-building play in

supporting full implementation of the International Tracing Instrument and relevant provisions of the Programme of Action.

31. In discussions under agenda item 6 (a), participants exchanged information and shared experiences on national marking policies and practices and implementation challenges and opportunities. Participants also discussed good practices, lessons learned and practical measures to enhance the reliable and adequate marking of small arms and light weapons.

32. In discussions under agenda item 6 (b), participants exchanged information and shared experiences on national policies and practices relating to record-keeping and implementation challenges and opportunities. Participants also exchanged views on good practices and lessons learned and considered practical measures relating to accurate and effective record-keeping.

33. In discussions under agenda item 6 (c), participants exchanged information and shared experiences on cooperation in tracing, including relevant policies, processes, practices and tools, and implementation challenges and opportunities. Participants also exchanged views on good practices, lessons learned and practical measures to strengthen effective cooperation in tracing small arms and light weapons.

34. In discussions under agenda item 6 (d), participants exchanged information on national policies and practices and implementation challenges and opportunities regarding effective national frameworks to support the full implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument.

35. In discussions under agenda item 6 (e), participants exchanged information and shared experiences regarding regional cooperation in support of the full implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument.

36. In discussions under agenda item 6 (f), participants exchanged information and shared experiences on implementation challenges and opportunities relating to the provision of international assistance, upon request, and capacity-building to support the full implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument.

37. During discussions and without prejudice to the views of other participants, some participants indicated that, in their view, certain issues were important for the implementation of the Programme of Action and/or the International Tracing Instrument. On those issues, other participants expressed a different opinion. Those issues included the following:

(a) The desirability of including ammunition for small arms and light weapons within the relevant international frameworks, and the need to address the transfer of such ammunition across borders;

(b) The marking, record-keeping and tracing of ammunition for small arms and light weapons, on which a number of experts during this meeting shared national practices and pointed out challenges;

(c) The possibility of a legally binding instrument on marking, record-keeping and tracing;

(d) Measures to strengthen States' capacity to prevent and combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons across borders, including regional cooperation, technical assistance and training and joint exercises;

(e) Linkages between terrorism, organized crime, trafficking in drugs and precious minerals and the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons;

(f) Demand and supply issues;

(g) Civilian possession of small arms and light weapons;

(h) The transfer of relevant technologies to developing States in a non-discriminatory manner;

(i) Linkages among security, armed violence, development and human rights;

(j) The potential role of further open-ended meetings of governmental experts as part of the follow-up mechanisms of the Programme of Action;

(k) Other issues within the Programme of Action which did not fall within the scope of the main themes of this meeting, including effective stockpile management, weapons disposal, illicit brokering and the effective management of small arms and light weapons throughout their life cycle.

38. The Chair drew participants' attention to a summary, prepared under his own responsibility, of the views expressed during the meeting (A/CONF.192/MGE/2011/CRP.3).

39. Also at the 10th meeting, on 13 May 2011, the Open-ended Meeting of Governmental Experts on the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects considered its report and adopted it by consensus.